

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /117 W
----- 042631

R 211728Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3859

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3938

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CI, IT

SUBJECT: ITALY-CHILE RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY. ITALIANS CONTINUE TO AGONIZE OVER THEIR STATE OF
NON-RELATIONS WITH CHILE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 21 RESPONSIBLE ITALIAN MFA OFFICIAL TOLD US THAT
ITALIANS CONTINUE TO AGONIZE RE RELATIONS WITH GOC. ACCORDING
OFFICIAL, MINISTRY WAS PREPARED TWO WEEKS AGO TO SEND FIRST
FORMAL COMMUNICATION TO GOC FOREIGN MINISTRY IN FORM OF NOTE
NOTIFYING CHILEANS OF ARRIVAL OF NEW ITALIAN DCM, WHO IS ALSO
DE FACTO CHARGE IN CONTINUING ABSENCE OF ITALIAN AMBASSADOR.
(AMBASSADOR BEHMANN HAS REMAINED IN ITALY FOR A COMBINATION OF
PERSONAL AND POLITICAL REASONS. HIS SON HAS BEEN GRAVELY ILL.
BEHMANN HIMSELF WAS AN ARDENT ALLENDE FAN.)

3. SOURCE REMARKED THAT DCM/CHARGE HAD ARRIVED IN SANTIAGO
IN LATE DECEMBER, AND HAS HAD INFORMAL AND ROUTINE CONTACTS
WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY SINCE THAT TIME. ACCORDING OFFICIAL,
DCM HAD INFORMED CHILEANS THAT ARRIVAL NOTE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING,
AND HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED IF QUERIED BY PRESS TO EXPLAIN THAT
ITALIAN ACTION NOT RPT NOT RELATED TO QUESTION OF ITALIAN
RECOGNITION OF GOC.

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4. SOURCE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD BEEN DIRECTED BY FOREIGN

MINISTER TO INSTRUCT DCM TO DEFER DELIVERY OF NOTE UNTIL RESOLUTION OF ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS (GOVERNMENT RESIGNED ON MARCH 2, HAS BEEN RECONSTITUTED AND IS NOW AWAITING CONFIDENCE VOTE IN PARLIAMENT). ACCORDING OFFICIAL, DCM CABLED MINISTRY MARCH 20 TO EFFECT THAT SINCE CRISIS NOW RESOLVED, HE WOULD PROCEED WITH DELIVERY OF NOTE, UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO THE CONTRARY FROM ROME. OFFICIAL SAID FOREIGN MINISTER AGAIN DIRECTED HIM TO ADVISE DCM IN SANTIAGO TO DEFER NOTE DELIVERY FOR "A FEW MORE DAYS."

5. SOURCE REMARKED THAT ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH OF TOHA LAST WEEK HAD REKINDLED STRONG ANTI-JUNTA PRESS TREATMENT HERE OF CHILEAN SITUATION, AND PRODUCED PREDICTABLE CRIES OF ANGUISH FROM ITALIAN LEFT, AND THIS FACTOR CERTAINLY HAD BEARING ON GOI'S CONTINUING NO-ACTION POSTURE TOWARD GOC. HE COMMENTED THAT CHILEANS HAD BEEN REMARKABLY PATIENT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND WERE APPARENTLY ALLOWING ITALIANS TO THREASH OUT THEIR OWN PROBLEMS WITHOUT ANY PRESSURE FROM GOC.

6. RE CHILEAN REPRESENTATION IN ROME, OFFICIAL SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY DEALS ON ROUTINE BASIS AT OFFICE LEVEL WITH CHILEAN MINISTER/COUNSELOR, WHO IS DE FACTO CHARGE AND WHO CAME TO ROME DURING ALLENDE REGIME. ACCORDING SOURCE, CHILEAN CHARGE HAS APPARENTLY BEEN CONTENT WITH THIS INFORMAL TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND THAT EX-CHILEAN AMBASSADOR VASSALO WHO HAS REMAINED IN ROME AND IS ACTIVE IN ANTI-JUNTA CHILEAN ORGANIZATION HERE HAD BEEN NO PROBLEM.

7. ACCORDING SOURCE, LISTING OF CHILEAN REPRESENTATION HERE HAS ALSO BEEN HEADACHE FOR MFA. PROTOCOL OFFICE HAD ROUTINELY PREPARED NEW DIPLOMATIC LIST TO BE ISSUED JANUARY 1, LEAVING SLOT FOR CHILEAN AMBASSADOR VACANT, AND CONTINUING TO LIST MINISTER/COUNSELOR AS NUMBER TWO, BUT NOT AS CHARGE SINCE THIS APPEARED TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH STATE OF NON-RELATIONS. HOWEVER, SOURCE SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HIMSELF HAD DIRECTED THAT NEW DIPLOMATIC LIST BE HELD UP UNTIL CHILEAN ISSUE WAS RESOLVED, AND TO DATE NEW LIST UNDISTRIBUTED.

8. SOURCE COMMENTED THAT ITALIANS' INABILITY TO COME TO A DECISION ON GOC RELATIONS PROBLEM WAS FRUSTRATING AND EMBARRASSING, BUT GOC'S APPARENT PATIENCE MADE IT EASIER FOR THE ITALIANS TO
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AVOID MAKING ANY MOVE ON SITUATION THAT COULD EXACERBATE LOCAL PASSIONS. VOLPE

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